

Message Text

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43

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 EAE-00 AID-05

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P R 211044Z JUL 75

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8049

INFO AMCONSUL CHIANG MAI

AMCONSUL UDORN

CINCPAC HONOLULU

DIA WASHDC

COMUSMACTHAI

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 14626

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: ADS 31 DECEMBER 1975

TAGS: PGOV, PINT, TH

SUBJ: CONSTITUTIONAL AMMENDMENT FAILS

REF: BANGKOK 16854 OF 23 OCTOBER 1974

1. AT A JOINT SESSION OF THE UPPER AND LOWER HOUSES OF THE THAI NATIONAL ASSEMBLY JULY 21, PARLIAMENT FAILED TO PASS A CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT WHICH WOULD HAVE LOWERED THE MINIMUM VOTING AGE FROM 20 TO 18, AND THE MINIMUM AGE FOR PARLIAMENTARY CANDIDATES FROM 25 TO 23. THE BREAKDOWN OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT VOTE WAS 181 FOR, 53 AGAINST, 62 ABSTAINERS AND 69 ABSENTEES. THE BILL NEEDED 183 VOTES TO PASS.

2. THE MAJORITY OF THE ABSENTEES WERE SENATORS. MOST OF THE ELECTED PARLIAMENTARIANS WHO WERE ABSENT OR ABSTAINED WERE FROM THE CONSERVATIVE PRO-GOVERNMENT PARTIES. THE PRO-GOVERNMENT UNION OF PARTIES, AT AN
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EARLIER MEETING, DID NOT TAKE A STAND ON THE CONSTITU-

TIONAL AMENDMENT AND ALLOWED EACH PARLIAMENTARIAN TO
VOTE HIS CONSCIENCE.

3. COMMENT: THE RESULT OF THE VOTE CAUSED HARE
FEELINGS BETWEEN THE LIBERALS AND THE CONSERVATIVES IN
THE ELECTED LOWER HOUSE, JUST AS A SIMILAR UNSUCCESSFUL
AMENDMENT ATTEMPT IN 1974 (SEE REFTEL). SINCE THE
DEMONCRAT AND NEW FORCE PARTIES WERE THE PRIME MOVERS
IN BRINGING THE CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT BEFORE THE
PARLIAMENT, THE FAILURE OF THE AMENDMENT DOES NOT
NECESSARILY THREATEN THE GOVERNMENT COALITION.
WHITEHOUSE

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NNN

Message Attributes

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